

The Peaceful Dove (*Geopelia placida*) was rather timid, and visited the nest only four times in three hours. Once in the nest, however, it was an easy matter to secure a photograph. When I approached the nest to change plates, the Dove would fly to a near-by rock and try to attract my attention by fluttering about and feigning a wounded wing.—NORMAN CHAFFER, R.A.O.U., Willoughby, N.S.W.

Stray Feathers

The Name Nullarbor.—The note by Mr. H. W. Ford in the current (July) issue, page 66, interested me, as for some time I have been trying to get at the root of the matter in regard to the name "Nullarbor." The explanation given by Mr. Ford is the one which has been adopted by the Government in their handbook to the East-West Line, but I cannot help thinking that there was a previous native name from which the modern one was altered to suit the bare aspect of the great plain. The Rev. John Mathew, of Victoria, well-known for his writings on aboriginal matters, told me that in Curr's "The Australian Race," to which he himself contributed, the name is spelt "Nullabar"; this work was published in 1880, and had been in preparation for several years. Curr says, "The Wonunda Meening tribe at Eyre's Sand-Patch give the Nullabar a very bad name, say it is beset with savage dogs, which on one occasion devoured some of their tribe, which entered on it. . . . The Yinla Meening tribe have their particular conception of the horrors of the Nullabar Plain; it is the haunt of an immense serpent, which has devoured all the animals, grass, and trees which are supposed, ages back, to have grown on the now barren waste." The country of the first-named tribe was originally settled in 1877, and that of the second (the Eucla district) in 1872, only a few years before the publication of Curr's volumes, so that he is likely to have had the original name. Mr. Whitlock (in the January, 1922, *Emu*), after visiting the plain, and making enquiries among the railway staff, favours the native origin of the name, and was told by a native born in the vicinity that "Boora" means "wind." As the Great Plain is notorious for the high winds which race uninterruptedly across its wide spaces, we have here a likely clue to the original meaning; whatever "Nulla" may have meant in that district (there is still a "Nulla-Wadder" not many miles from Eucla), it is improbable that it "nullified" the meaning of the latter part of the name. I may also mention that Mr. Mathew suggests Olupa, a Central Australian term for "wind," as one that might easily have become modified into "Nullabar," as the natives do not distinguish between the sounds of p and b, and an initial vowel usually implies the elision of a preceding consonant.—H. STUART DOVE, F.Z.S., W. Devonport, Tasmania.